

Draft Terms of Reference for an ERP Interim Science Board (ISB)

Background

In 1997, the CALFED Bay-Delta Program convened a panel of scientific experts—the Scientific Review Panel—to review the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) and make recommendations to bolster the scientific underpinning of the ERP. One of the Panel's suggestions included forming a standing science body composed of independent scientists to assist CALFED staff in developing and implementing the ERP: "From the outset, the (Ecosystem Restoration) Program should embed outside scientific expertise in the adaptive management process. This requires continuous involvement of independent science in the formulation and implementation of the ERPP. Involvement should include: 1) reviewing the rationale, methods, result, and analyses; 2) developing and reviewing recommendations and funding proposals; and 3) pointing out new opportunities."

CALFED is establishing an Interim Science Board (ISB) as a prototype of a standing science body to assist the ERP in developing and implementing the ERP. This standing science body must be of an interim duration because the final CALFED structure of governance is still being developed. CALFED anticipates that the Interim Science Board will be engaged through the Record of Decision and certification of final environmental documentation, with the possibility of extension until the final governance structure is defined and in place.

Mission Statement

The broad goal of the ISB is to assist the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) by providing scientific advice and guidance with a management orientation.

More specifically, the ISB will assist the CALFED staff to:

- establish a solid scientific/technical foundation for the ERP;
- provide scientific review, advice, and guidance;
- help ingrain ecosystem-based adaptive management in the implementation of the ERP;
- engage the scientific and technical questions at the root of policy issues and priorities.

Operating Procedures.

1. The Board's work products are to reflect its independent scientific judgement. To the extent that CALFED uses or alters work products there will be clear identification as to their administrative or independent status.
2. Questions will be posed to the Board via a written program of work and supplementary memoranda. The Board will respond with written statements.

3. CALFED shall designate a responsible party for directing the activities of the board and an ERP point of administrative contact.
4. The Board's formal contacts with agencies, stakeholders and the public will be via procedures established by CALFED to ensure fair and open access to the ISB and its work products.
5. The Board Chair (or Co-chairs) shall maintain close contact with CALFED staff.

Meeting Format

Meetings of the ISB will be of three types:

- **Open meetings** with structured public comments;
- **Open work sessions**, where the ISB may interact with (observers and representatives of agencies and stakeholders); and
- **Work sessions** of the ISB and staff.

Summaries of all meetings will be made available to the public.

Initial Work Program

CALFED staff has developed the following four tasks as an initial scope of work for the Interim Science Board.

Questions . Formal questions to be addressed in the initial Work Program

1. Help define PSP Funding Priorities, with reference to the 12 Areas of uncertainty posed by the Strategic Plan, plus those developed subsequently. CALFED requests the Board's suggestion and crafting of pointed language to help direct proposals toward adaptive management actions that will address the critical scientific uncertainties (above).

(Important Note: Since ISB members will be advising on the funding of projects and programs, ISB members will not be able to submit new projects in the FY 01 cycle, and members with potential conflicts may be excused from certain types of actions to be further defined. A detailed conflict of interest statement will be provided and discussed at a later meeting.)

2. Review the FY 2000 ERP Work Plan as a process for setting long-term priorities. Comment on approach and content of the White Papers, Tributary Assessments, and Reconnaissance-level analyses, with reference to areas receiving insufficient attention, and needs for integration of these work efforts. Guidance is also sought on other aspects of the Work Plan needed to apply adaptive management criteria.
3. Advice on how to maximize the information gain from FY 2000 Planning, Monitoring and Science Funding (\$7.4 million). Comments should include an outline for the architecture of a long-term science program to support the ERP, and to form the basis for improving information

in the areas of uncertainty. Given the need for the Board to focus on time-sensitive topics early on, it is envisioned that this would at first be an outline, based heavily on the Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration. [A Science Plan for the Delta might be a first priority here.] It is essential that it be started early on, and then developed in parallel with other work.

4. Provide formal, independent review of the White Papers.
5. (Other?)

Preparation

Potential Board members will need to review critical CALFED documents so that their comments and recommendations are based on:

- The best possible understanding of the ecosystems of the entire CALFED region;
- An understanding of the policy and administrative environment that influences ultimate funding and implementation decisions; and
- The time lines and targets for pending CALFED ERP and related actions.

To prepare for the inaugural meeting of the ISB, potential Board members should review the following documents:

- Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration
- Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan Vol. I
- Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan Vol. II
- Summary Report of the 1997 Scientific Review Panel
- 1999 Proposal Solicitation Package
- Policy-oriented priorities document (4 pages)

It is understood that members will have varying degrees of familiarity with these documents. Briefings will be held to cover key parts of these documents, and to update the ISB on programs and activities.

CALFED staff will also have copies of related material at the inaugural meeting for reference and for distribution to interested Board members. This material will include:

- Non-native/Invasive Species Task Force Draft Strategic Plan
- Non-native/Invasive Species Task Force Draft Implementation Plan
- CMARP Draft Report